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***Lake Prairie Elementary receives grant,
removes arsenic from drinking water***

INDIANAPOLIS – A \$75,650 grant from the Indiana Finance Authority (IFA)'s Arsenic Remediation Grant Program has helped Lake Prairie Elementary School in Lowell provide safer drinking water to its 440 students. The Tri-Creek school installed two new water wells after discovering arsenic levels from its previous wells measured above the recently-tightened national standards.

“The project was a high priority so we paid for it from existing funds, the remainder of which is used towards educational materials to help kids academically. The grant will allow us to replenish that fund,” said Nathan Kleefisch, Director of Operations for Tri-Creek School Corporation.

The Indiana Department of Environmental Management's Drinking Water Branch had identified arsenic levels in the untreated water to be as high as 24 parts per billion (ppb); the U.S. EPA had recently lowered the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) to 10 ppb.

In response, the Tri-Creek School Corporation installed two new drinking water wells, well pumps, controls and a new water main from the new wells to the school's mechanical room. Since the new wells have been in operation, no arsenic has been detected in the drinking water.

“The state made the grant process easy, and now I can rest assured knowing that we are providing the safest quality water to our students,” Kleefisch said.

The grant program, which was started in 2007, is managed by the IFA's Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Program and awards funds to small systems that must make improvements to comply with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's lowered arsenic limits.

“Indiana's drinking water systems do their best to stay in compliance with all of the state and federal requirements, but new rules can sometimes cause a financial burden for our smaller systems,” said Jennifer Alvey, Public Finance Director. “Governor Daniels is intent on improving the health of Hoosiers, and this incentive helps these systems provide the safest drinking water possible without the strain on their budgets.”

Governor Mitch Daniels created the IFA in 2005 to more effectively manage State-related financial programs such as the State Revolving Fund Loan Programs under one entity.

Entities interested in more information about the Arsenic Remediation Grant Program can contact Sarah Hudson, DWSRF Program Administrator, at (317) 232-8663 or sahudson@ifa.in.gov, or visit www.srf.in.gov.

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